

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend Claims 2, 7, 10, 22 and 28, as follows:

1. Canceled.
2. (Currently Amended) An The apparatus comprising: of claim 1, wherein  
a network element port circuit comprising  
a first input/output (I/O) port, a second I/O port and a third I/O port;  
an optical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and  
configured to  
couple an optical network connector to a mounting surface,  
and  
couple said optical network connector to said first I/O port;  
an electrical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and  
configured to  
couple an electrical network connector to said mounting  
surface, and  
couple the electrical network connector to said second I/O port,  
wherein  
said optical connector interface and said electrical  
connector interface are vertically aligned with  
one another with respect to said mounting  
surface, and  
 said electrical connector interface comprises a registered  
 jack 45 (RJ-45) interface.
3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein  
 said optical connector interface comprises an interface of a small form factor  
 pluggable (SFP) optical module.
4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein  
 said optical connector interface comprises an interface of a gigabit interface  
 converter (GBIC) optical module.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:  
an electrical isolation circuit coupled to said RJ-45 interface.
6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein  
said electrical isolation circuit comprises one or more magnetics components.
7. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The apparatus ~~of claim 1 further~~ comprising:  
a network element port circuit comprising  
a first input/output (I/O) port, a second I/O port and a third I/O port,  
an optical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and  
configured to  
couple an optical network connector to a mounting surface,  
and  
couple said optical network connector to said first I/O port,  
an electrical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and  
configured to  
couple an electrical network connector to said mounting  
surface, and  
couple the electrical network connector to said second I/O port,  
wherein  
said optical connector interface and said electrical  
connector interface are vertically aligned with  
one another with respect to said mounting  
surface; and  
an auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit, wherein  
said first, second and third I/O ports are coupled to said auto-media  
detection physical layer protocol circuit.
8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:  
a visual indicator to indicate which of said optical connector interface and said  
electrical connector interface is active on said network element port  
circuit.

9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said visual indicator comprises at least one of a light emitting diode and a light pipe.
10. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein ~~wherein~~ said electrical connector interface comprises an upper connector interface of said network element port circuit, and ~~wherein~~ said optical connector interface comprises a lower connector interface of said network element port circuit.
11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising:  
a first electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said optical connector interface; and  
a second electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said electrical connector interface.
12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said mounting surface comprises a printed circuit board.
13. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
a network element port circuit comprising  
an auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit, and  
first, second and third input/output (I/O) ports, wherein  
said first and second I/O ports are coupled to said third I/O port;  
an optical connector interface coupled to the network element port circuit at the first I/O port;  
an electrical connector interface coupled to the network element port circuit at the second I/O port, wherein  
said optical connector interface and said electrical connector interface are substantially adjacent to one another along a line defined by an intersection of a connector-receiving plane of said network element port circuit and a connector-insertion plane of said network element port circuit.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said electrical connector interface comprises:  
a registered jack 45 (RJ-45) interface.
15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said optical connector interface comprises:  
an interface of a small form factor pluggable (SFP) optical module.
16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said optical connector interface comprises:  
an interface of a gigabit interface converter (GBIC) optical module.
17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:  
an electrical isolation circuit coupled to said electrical connector interface.
18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said electrical isolation circuit comprises:  
one or more magnetics components.
19. Canceled.
20. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 14, further comprising:  
a visual indicator to indicate which of said optical connector interface and said electrical connector interface is active on said network element port circuit.
21. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein said a visual indicator comprises:  
at least one of a light emitting diode and a light pipe.
22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 14, wherein  
~~wherein~~ said electrical connector interface comprises an upper connector interface of said network element port circuit, and  
~~wherein~~ said optical connector interface comprises a lower connector interface of said network element port circuit.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:  
a first electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said optical connector interface; and  
a second electromagnetic signal shield enclosing at least a portion of said electrical connector interface.
24. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:  
coupling an optical connector interface at a first input/output (I/O) port of a network element port circuit, wherein  
said optical connector interface is further coupled to a third I/O port of said network element port circuit and to a mounting surface;  
coupling an electrical connector interface at a second I/O port of said network element port circuit, wherein  
said electrical connector interface is further coupled to the third I/O port of said network element port circuit and to said mounting surface  
such that said optical connector interface and said electrical connector interface are vertically aligned with one another with respect to said mounting surface, and  
said electrical connector interface comprises a RJ-45 interface.
25. Canceled
26. (Previously Presented) The network element port circuit of claim 7, wherein said auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit is configured to  
select a selected port from between said first and second I/O ports,  
process a signal received on said selected port, and  
transmit the processed signal from said third I/O port.
27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein  
said auto-media detection physical layer protocol circuit is configured to  
select a selected port from between said first and second I/O ports,  
process a signal received on said selected port, and  
transmit the processed signal from said third I/O port.

28. (Currently Amended) An ~~The~~ apparatus comprising: of Claim 1, wherein  
a network element port circuit comprising  
a first input/output (I/O) port, a second I/O port and a third I/O port;  
an optical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and  
configured to  
couple an optical network connector to a mounting surface,  
and  
couple said optical network connector to said first I/O port;  
an electrical connector interface coupled to said third I/O port and  
configured to  
couple an electrical network connector to said mounting  
surface, and  
couple the electrical network connector to said second I/O port,  
wherein  
said optical connector interface and said electrical  
connector interface are vertically aligned with  
one another with respect to said mounting  
surface,  
said the optical connector interface is configured to be  
separably coupled to said the optical network  
connector, and  
said the electrical connector interface is configured to be  
separably coupled to said the electrical network  
connector.